

The Tragedy of Hamlet

*Ghost.* Pitty me not, but lend thy serious hearing  
to what I shall vnfold.

*Ham.* Speake I am bound to here,

*Ghost.* So art thou to reuenge, when thou shalt heare,

*Ham.* What?

*Ghost.* I am thy fathers spirit,

Doomd for a certaine tearme to walke the night,  
And for the day confind to fast in fires,  
Till the soule crimes done in my daies of nature  
Are burnt and purg'd away: but that I am forbid  
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale vnfolde whose lightest word  
Would harrow vp thy soule, freeze thy young blood,  
Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres,  
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,  
And each particular haire to stand an end,  
Like quils vpon the fearefull Porpentine:  
But this eternall blazon must not be  
To eares of flesh and b'ood, list, list, O list,  
If thou did'st euer thy deare father loue.

*Ham.* O God.

*Ghost.* Reuenge his soule, and most vnnaturall murther.

*Ham.* Murther.

*Ghost.* Murther most soule, as in the best it is,  
But this most foule, strange and vnnaturall.

*Ham.* Hast me to know't, that I with wings as swift,  
As meditation, or the thoughts of Loue  
May sweepe to my reuenge.

*Ghost.* I find thee apt,  
And duller shouldest thou be then the fat weede  
That rootes it selfe in ease on Lethe wharffe,  
Wouldst thou not sturre in this; now Hamlet heare,  
Tis giuen out, that sleeping in my Orchard,  
A Serpent stung me, so the whole care of Denmarke  
Is by a forged processe of my death  
Ranckely abused: but know thou noble Youth,  
The Serpent that did sting thy fathers life  
Now weares his Crowne.

*Ham.* O my prophetike soule! my Uncle:

*Ghost.* I that incestuous, that adulterate beast,  
With witchcraft of his wits, with trayterous gifts,  
O wicked wit, and giftes that haue the power  
So to seduce; wonne to his shamfull lust  
The will of my most seeming virtuous Queene;  
O Hamlet, what falling off was there  
From me whose loue was of that dignity  
That it went hand in hand, even with the vow  
I made to her in marriage, and to decline  
Vpon a wretch whose naturall gifts were poore,  
To those of mine; but vertue as it neuer will be moued,  
Though lewdnesse court it in a shape of heauen  
So but though to a radiant Angle linckt.  
Will sort it selfe in a celestiall bed  
And pray on garbage.

But lost, me thinkes I scent the morning ayre,  
Briefe let me be; sleeping within my Orchard,  
My custome alwayes of the afternoone,  
Vpon my secure houre, thy Uncle stole  
With iuyce of cursed Hebona in a viall,  
And in the porches of my eares did poure,  
The leaprous distilment, whose effect  
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,  
That swift as quicksilver it courses through  
The naturall gates and allies of the body,  
And with a sodaine vigour it doth possesse  
And curde like eager droppings into milke,  
The thin and wholsome blood; so did it mine,  
And a most instant tetter barkt about  
Most Lazerlike with vile and lothsome crust  
All my smooth body.  
Thus was I sleeping by a brothers hand,  
Of life, of Crowne, of Queene at once dispatcht,  
Cut off even in the blossomes of my sinne,  
Vnnuzled, disappointed, yn-anueld,  
No reckning made, but sent to my account  
With all my imperfections on my head,  
O horrible, O horrible, most horrible;  
If thou hast nature in thee beare it nor,

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